The proceedings commenced at 12 noon, M. E. Watts Esq., B. A., Barrister-at-Law, Dewan, presiding. Among those present were O. S. Ramaswami Iyer Esq., B. A., B. E., C. E., Devaswom Commissioner, H. S. Chatfield Esq., M. A., Barrister-at-Law, Chief Justice, Major G. F. Turner, M. C., Commandant, Nayar Brigade, Heads of the various Departments and Offices, members of the Legislative Council and several other official and non-official ladies and gentlemen.

Copies of the Dewan's opening address in English, Malayalam, and Tamil were distributed to the members, as also copies of the Administration Report of the State for 1103 M. E. in English and Malayalam, of the report on the Administration of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for 1103 M. E. in English and Malayalam, of the Statistics of Travancore for 1103 M. E. in English, and of the memoranda of subjects for representation at the session in English, Malayalam, and Tamil. Copies of the Statement of Action taken on the pending representations at the 22nd, 23rd and 24th sessions of the Assembly were also distributed to the members.

The Dewan then opened the session with the following

ADDRESS.

"GENTLEMEN,

For the fourth year in succession it is my privilege to welcome you to this Assembly by gracious command of Her Highness the Maharani Regent. This is the twenty-fifth session and therefore a jubilee year in the life of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

A Retrospect.

2. The day is almost epoch-making and one naturally pauses to look back and appraise values. It was in 1904 that this truly representative institution was called into being to afford an opporunity to the people of expressing direct to the Government their wants and wishes and of representing their views regarding administrative measures adopted by the Government from time to time. That is the purpose of the Assembly so far as you, its members, are concerned. There is also another purpose and that is to enable the Government to learn at first hand how their actions affect the people and to gain the benefit of the people's suggestions as to what may be necessary to promote administrative efficiency and to improve the condition of the country. There are many among you who have come here as representatives year after year and there are many among you who have made a close study of the proceedings of the Assembly and of the administrative acts of the Government during the last quarter of a century. I, too, have made the study and I find that in the proceedings of the Assembly was sown many a seed which grew to fruition as reforms and administrative measures carried out from time to time. There is nothing surprising in the fact that the acts of the Government should thus be attuned to the voice of the people when a complete harmony of interests prevails

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between the Ruler and the ruled. I shall be detaining you unduly long were I to detail all that has been achieved by this happy collaboration for the progress and wellbeing of the country; and there is no need for me to repeat what is well known not merely to past and present members of the Assembly but also to the democratic-minded peoples of this land of wide-spread education whom you represent here. No student of this institution can doubt its increasing value as an active medium between the Government and the people. The Assembly may justly be proud of its record of twenty-five years' valuable assistance rendered to the people through the administrators of the country. I have tried to conduct this Assembly as my predecessors have done for twenty years before me. They have ungrudgingly acknowledged the help rendered to them by the Assembly. I join whole-heartedly in that appreciation of your efforts. I can think of no more effective way for the people to bring their needs and express their views directly to the notice of the head of the administration than at a public assembly, the proceedings of which receive the Dewan's close personal attention not merely at the session itself but also, item by item, throughout the twelve months before the next Assembly meets. The Assembly has stood the test of a quarter of a century; and I for one devoutly hope that it will never lose the characteristics which have made it so valuable in the past.

Finance.

3. As in the preceding two years, so also in 1103, we laboured under no anxieties in the matter of finance. In 1101 we estimated for a revenue of Rs. 206·81 lakhs and realised Rs. 221·88 lakhs. In 1102 we estimated for Rs. 211·58 lakhs and realised Rs. 232·52 lakhs. In 1103 we estimated for Rs. 223·21 lakhs and actually realised Rs. 242·29 lakhs. Out of all this we contemplated spending Rs. 203 lakhs in 1101, and actually spent Rs. 198·87 lakhs. In 1102 we meant to spend Rs. 208 lakhs but were unable to spend more than Rs. 205 lakhs. In 1103 we arranged to spend Rs. 221·82 lakhs and in fact spent Rs. 218·40 lakhs. You will see from these figures that we found ourselves left at the end of 1101 with a surplus of Rs. 18 lakhs and at the end of 1102 with Rs. 28 lakhs while the surplus for 1103 was Rs. 24 lakhs. I know there are critics who on principle hold up their hands in horror at the very mention of a surplus. I know also that there is a kindlier class of critics who criticise only to know the reason why. For a variety of reasons Travancore revenues have risen very appreciably during the last three years. In a system of Government where the people are not called upon each year to provide in taxes what will cover the expenditure on the year's requirements, it is necessary to make normal expenditure, commonly styled expenditure out of revenue, keep within the limits of the estimated revenue for the year. In the matter of estimating, mechanical aids have in certain directions to be resorted to, as for instance in calculating averages; and so it is that the State's annual budget is framed on the basis of the actual figures for the last three years preceding,

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